1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

of the High Chief were respectful to them. They cooked for them on board. If they foregathered there was no youth there. The noble youth was of no use in the affairs of the country. The old men drank kava and ruled the land; a noble youth would not be present unless it were to make kava. Later on he would be able to pronounce upon matters: he would know what the men of old had decided.

The custom of "bearing the Sau" or "lifting the Sau" (*thola Sau*) has been discontinued. It is described thus:

> The Chief formerly had a nobleman to "bear his reign," to work for his reign. He bore the stress of it, the Chief leaned upon him. If the father dies, the Chief appoints one of his sons to bear for him, to be his hand and mouth."

Tione Wesele filled this office because he was energetic, enterprising, and brave. The Lakembans feared him because of his energy. If at a ceremonial kava, a lowborn man went to the top of the ring or did something wrong, Tione Wesele would drag him out. If a bad feast were sent in, he would send it back, or seize and whip the givers.

Carpenters, called *matai*, are highly respected in Lau. Two men, Tiafau [4] and Lemaki, coming at different times to Lakemba, established two houses of hereditary carpenters, the titles and the positions of carpenters to nobles. In the Lemaki family the title passes from father to eldest son.

The Tiafau family, who came from Tonga in Christian times, were originally heralds to the Tui Tonga, and later achieved the craft by the skill and strength of their hands. They were experts in making drums (*nafa*).

Lemaki was originally a chief in Manono, in Samoa. With a relative, Leha, he went to Tonga to seek timber for a war canoe; there, hearing of timber in Fiji, they went to Lakemba, and took up their residence with the nobles. For, Lemaki's son having been killed in Ono, as the price of blood and price of work, the nobles of Lakemba asked his family not to return to Samoa, and gave them the land of Lekutu, where they still live.

A clan of Lemaki is in Nggalinggali; some of the family are in Taveuni and Nairai.

The first Lemaki was succeeded by Manokotiale, his son, for in this family the son of the chief wife (*alewa mbau*) is the successor; not the brother, as in Fiji. His son Vulivuli joined the Naivi faction and was killed in the civil war in Naiau. His other son, Maopo, succeeded. He had seventy wives.

Of old the Lemaki merely superintended the work; but later descendants worked with their hands. The Lemaki did not plant but served the nobles, which gave him the right to appropriate pigs, yams, or reserve a crop for himself; he could do so anywhere in Lau, whether the crop belonged to a

[4] Or Taunga, I am not certain as to the title.

1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

554
614
463

noble or a commoner. In return for this he built canoes for the people. This continued under the late Tui Naiau during the building of the Fane, a canoe in honor of Fane, the daughter of Ratu Erone who protected Lemaki in the exercise of his right, but cautioned him not to impose it on the common people who might prosecute him, but only on the nobles who dare not object.

VILLAGE CHIEFS OF LAKEMBA

622

In each village there is a chief usually bearing the title of Tui. The chiefs are spoken of as "the old men of the countryside." Except the Lord of Nasangalau and Tui Soso of Nukunuku, they are not honored in Tumbou, but only in the country.

The chief of Nasangalau is usually known as Ramasi, Sir Cloth. He is the cloth for Natokalau,[5] whereas the Lord of Tumbou is the cloth for Navuaira. The *masi* are those that rule the land. Formerly the two "Cloths" would discuss anything that was intended, war, a potlatch, a feast. When they had decided they reported to the Lord of Naiau, who approved. The chief of Nasangalau also bears the title of Tui Natokalau. It is doubtful whether the third title of Tui Nasangalau is ancient. One man says the chief is first called Tui Nasangalau, then installed as Ramasi.

Except the people of Nasangalau, no one in the North salutes this chief with the *tama;* but they all use this salutation in front of the door of Ralovo, who lives in Nasangalau but whose mother was a great lady of Tumbou.

Vakano is a lowborn village. They go about Natokalau with folded arms. The chief is now called Tui Vakano, but of old there was no such title, because a god was called Tui Vakano. The old title was Tui ni Mata, Lord of the Face. Evidence from Vanua Levu shows this to mean "Lord of the Grave."

The chief of Nukunuku is called Tui Soso, Lord of the Field, after a large extent of low land near the village. The people of Tumbou say there was a god called Tui Nukunuku, but the people of the place know nothing of this. The present chief is a Tongan. The nobility of Nukunuku is extinct. Formerly Tui Soso was a man of importance and could wear a turban in Tumbou.

Yandrana are not lowborn like Vakano. They are termed the *mbati ki Lakemba*, that is, "teeth" or "edge for Lakemba." "They stand on the edge; the nobles lean upon them." They fight for Lakemba. The old title of the chief is said to have been Vata ni Tawake. The present one of Tui Yandrana is a government one.

[5] *Mari kei Natokalau* not *wei*, of; *wei* is never used in this expression.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

MEN'S CRAFTS

HOUSE BUILDING

DWELLING HOUSES

The principal house type is the sleeping or dwelling house (*vale ni mothe*) used by the household. Generally when a young man's marriage is arranged, a site is selected and plans are made for building a house. Occasionally the house is started or even completed before the wedding, so that the young couple may move into it on the wedding day. Usually, however, a year or more passes after the wedding before the house is finished.

The main problem in house building is payment for labor. The house site is clan property, for the use of which the individual pays nothing. Materials consist chiefly of wood from the bush which is free to all. But for the labor, in which the whole village assists, the house owner and his clan must pay in the form of a series of feasts for the workers, one feast for each working day. A worker suspends his own activities, normally the procuring and preparing of the evening meal. Hence housebuilding involves a reciprocal exchange of labor for food.

The carpenter, on the other hand, receives, besides the largest and best share of the daily feast, a gift of tapa, mats, and kava (called *kamunanga ni thakathaka*) in return for his skilled labor. These gifts may be classed as wages. After the work has been completed, these gifts are taken to the house of the carpenter by the owner and some members of his clan and are presented ceremonially to the carpenter. The kava ceremony follows, if kava is part of the offering.

On islands where food is not abundant, provision for the series of feasts necessary to complete even a small house requires initiative and forethought. The resources of the whole clan are utilized. Building an ordinary dwelling house requires a year to two and is a strain on the resources of the clan. Usually the owner must solicit from relatives in other villages, thus incurring further obligations. Hence, not many new houses are built. Unless his home is destroyed by a hurricane, a man usually builds only one house during his lifetime.

While I was on Kambara four houses were under construction: two in Tokalau, one in Nggalinggali, and one in Undu. One house in Tokalau and the house in Undu had been started before I arrived and were completed before I left. When I visited Namuka and Mothe no houses were under construction. On Ongea one house and on Fulanga one house in Muanaithake and one in Naivindamu were being built.

Well-built houses last several decades, but the strong hardwood beams last much longer. The main supporting posts (*nduru*) made of greenheart,

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

type of spear, called *tavaiongea* (cut on Ongea) was made on Ongea of *mbau* barbed with points of greenheart. The following description of a *tavaiongea* spear, formerly belonging to the chief of Fulanga, was obtained from an informant in Muanaithake.

> The shaft of the spear, of greenheart or *mbau* wood, was about 4 meters long. It had two very fine, strong points each about 15 cm. long, made of the tail of the *vai* fish. They were fitted to the wooden point of the spear shaft and tied securely with very fine black sennit (*mangimangi matai lalai ai lawa ni moto*), which was wrapped around the spear from the pointed end to the middle of the shaft. Above the points, secured to the shaft in the sennit, were six sharp barbs made of the same wood as the spear.

Ongea men say, however, that the *tavaiongea* did not have a point of bone.

None of the old men questioned had seen a bow and arrow, but they had heard that the bow was formerly made of mangrove, *moli* (trees of the *Citrus* group of Rutaceae), or *mbau* and tied with sennit. The arrow was made of a single piece of *mbau* or greenheart.

Exact information regarding the sling could not be obtained. Slingstones were unworked. No slingstones of baked clay were found.

Baskets

Baskets (*kato*) are made of plaited coconut leaflets. The most common type is the *kato mbolambola* made and used mainly by men for carrying raw and cooked food. The type is common in western Polynesia. It is called *'ato fili tasi* in Samoa and has been described by Buck (2, pp. 189-194, figs. 97-99, pls. 12, *B* and 13, *A-D*). Other coconut-leaf baskets made by men are the *kato musu* and the *kato vuni* used as food containers.

WOMEN'S CRAFTS

Barkcloth

DISTRIBUTION OF THE CRAFT

The distribution of tapa making in Lau depends on the quality of the local paper mulberry and on the presence of tapa making specialists, women who belong to certain clans and hand down their art and tools to their daughters. Paper mulberry is found on every island, but the best quality for making tapa is grown only on Namuka and Mothe, the tapa making centers of southern Lau. However, of the six islands studied, tapa is made also on the island of Kambara.

Southern Lau and Lakemba are known for the type of tapa made into long sheets, called *ngatu*. This is an acceptable gift in any presentation ceremony and especially in demand as tribute to the high chief at Lakemba. It is highly prized throughout Fiji. Barkcloth in Lau is made into sheets according to two methods which have been called in this study the Fijian and

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

There was apparently little if any gardening on these islands before the introduction of manioc and sweet potato in recent times, inasmuch as yams, taro, and bananas, the main native garden products of Fiji, grow poorly in this soil. Jungle products formerly provided the staple food. According to informants, the *wangiri* nut was the staple on the limestone islands and Kambara, while the *yambia* (*Tacca pinnatifida*) was the staple on the volcanic islands. Collecting of fruits, nuts, tubers, green leaves, and wood grubs in the bush was supplemented by many kinds of fishing, pig and fowl raising, and by hunting sea turtle and coconut crabs. Moreover, food was and is still imported from the volcanic islands in exchange for craft products. The development of craftsmanship was based on the presence of rare and valuable resources such as hardwoods, the finest types of paper mulberry for making barkcloth, and pandanus. Carpentry, fishing and in recent times barkcloth making, were organized under hereditary specialists and a high degree of technical skill was attained. Before the first contact with western civilization, canoes, wooden bowls, drums, weapons, barkcloth, mats, and perfumed oil from the southern islands were in demand throughout Fiji and Tonga.

The native Lauan economic system still functions with slight modifications today. It is still closely integrated with the whole social and religious life of the natives. Practically all work is done in kinship groups. Even now a man labors not for himself but primarily for his clan. The main task of production is borne by the household or the sub-clan, depending on the size of the group and the nature of the task. Work requiring many hands, such as house and canoe building and barkcloth making, is done communally by a clan or village group under the direction of a specialist. Important steps such as the planting and harvesting of yams, the felling of the hull or launching of a canoe, the erection of the main house-posts and the completion of the house are marked by

8: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1938
OQ6 Lau OQ6
Levuka

POTMAKING CENTRES

323 463 Levuka village, Lakemba, was formerly the centre of the potmaking industry in Lau. The following account of the history of the Levuka people was obtained on Lakemba.

173 323 463 The Levuka people were originally two fisher-groups, called Ngone Ndau, who lived at Mbau. One group was called Kai Mbutoni (people of the flat) and the other was called Kai Ndelanikoro (people of the hill-village). The women of the Ngone Ndau were potters. The two groups were expelled from Mbau and the Kai Mbutoni went to Namathu on the east coast of Koro island in the Lomai Viti group, while the Kai Ndelanikoro went to Lakemba and settled on the beach at Tumbou. This group was called Kai Wai and from them the Levuka people of Lakemba have descended. Later the group moved to Kendekende, the old village site on the hill above Tumbou. At Kendekende were living the sibs of Thekena, Narewandamu, and Targalevu. The Thekena sib, consisting of Thekena, Nandomole, and Katumbalevu, claimed descent from the war hero, Ndaunisai, and ruled the island. They gave the chieftainship to Levuka because, according to the tale, the Levuka people had protected the son of a Thekena chief who went to Mbau. Later the chieftainship reverted to Thekena, and Levuka, with the help of Mbau and Nakorotumboura, the Ngone Sau people of the Ra coast (Viti Levu), attacked and defeated Thekena at Kendekende. For this reason the Levuka people are permitted to wear the turban in Mbau. After Levuka the present rulers, Katumbalevu, became chiefs and the groups moved to their present village-sites of Tumbou and Levuka.

The Levuka women continued to make pots, and the art was handed down from mother to daughter. Since the group was endogamous the art was endemic, and Levuka became the centre of pottery-making in Lau.

323 463 317 Since no Levuka potmakers are now living, the method of fabrication was obtained at Levuka from Fane Loata, an old woman whose parents were Levukans, and who had witnessed the process many times. Potter's clay was obtained from Sosoilonggi, near Levuka village. The

8: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1938
OQ6 Lau OQ6
Levuka

women dug it at a depth of about thirty centimetres from the surface of the ground. It was carried in baskets *(kato mbolambola)* by young women to the village. Black sand, used for tempering, was obtained from Vatulingilingi, Waitambu. Each potter made pots in her own home. To make a pot *(tulituli)*, clay, sand, and water were mixed thoroughly on an old mat. Then a large lump of the clay, sufficient to make the entire pot, was rolled into a ball, flattened out and the edges built up into the walls of the pot. The clay was not rolled into coils. During the process of construction the pot rested on a ring of barkcloth, called *tonggi*. The outer surface of the pot was beaten with a wooden paddle, called *kau ni tulituli*, against a stone, called *vatu ni tulituli*, held inside the pot. Paddles and stones were of various sizes. Designs were incised on the rim or the wall-surface with *sasa* (midrib of coconut-leaflet). The pots were dried in the sun for a day or two and then fired. For firing, coconut-spathes were piled up and the pots were laid on their sides on the pile and covered with more coconut-spathes. The pile was lighted and if the fire was hot, the pots became red. They were fired for about two hours and then removed with a stick inserted into the opening. While the pots were still hot, a varnish made of *makandre*-gum was rubbed on the outside surface of the *vuluvulu* (basin)-type and *ndonggo* (mangrove) was rubbed on the outside surface of the *kuro* (cooking pot)-type. The following types of earthenware vessels were made in Levuka: *kuro*, a pot used for cooking, *vuluvulu*, a basin used for hand washing and *sangga*, a jar used for drinking water (Pl. A, fig. 3).

The Levuka women manufactured pots in Levuka for trade in the southern islands. They also accompanied their men, who were professional sailors and traders, to such islands as Kambara and Oneate, where suitable clay was to be found, and made pots on the islands to supply the local demand.

On Kambara, according to old informants, they lived in the village for which they were making pots. The clay was obtained from Matanimoko at the foot of Ndelaioloi near Lomatchi village. The men dug the clay and carried it in baskets to the village where the women were working.

8: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1938
OQ6 Lau OQ6

323 463 438 The pots were made in a shed, according to the built-up, lump-technique of the Levukans. Two main types of pots were made: *ndolokoto* and *ndari*. The *ndolokoto* was a large cooking-pot, one to two metres high, and up to one and a half metres in diameter. The pot was rounded, so that it could not stand upright. It was laid on its side on two stones over the fire. The pot had two narrow mouths, one at each end. The *ndari* was a basin or bowl made in various [531] sizes and used for kava or for pudding. It was decorated with incised geometric designs around the rim. The Kambara women traded mats for Levuka pots. Occasionally the Kambara men obtained pots in Levuka.

The Kambara women were not pot-makers, but informants remember that one woman who made pots lived in Tokalau for many years. Her name was Tara Nevini from Nandurumbua sib, Nggalikarua village, Matuku. She left Kambara just before the measles epidemic in 1875.

[317] On Oneate the Levuka women made pots of red clay *(nggele ndamu)* found on the hills, mixed with black sand *(nuku loaloa)* from Sovilolo, a beach on the island. According to Tui Oneate (chief of Oneate), when the Levuka people were succeeded by Katumbalevu, they moved to Oneate, where they lived until they were recalled to Lakemba.*

Pots were imported into southern Lau from the island of Matuku. They were made in the village of Nggalikarua.

Pots from Kandavu were also traded in southern Lau. On Kambara they were exchanged for barkcloth *(ngatu)*, wooden kava-bowls *(kumete ni yanggona)*, food-bowls *(kumete ni kana manioke)*, perfumed oil *(waliwali)*, and [435] digging-sticks *(saupa)*. There was no standard of value, but the women say one large Kandavu pot was equivalent to about one wooden kava-bowl or to one sheet of barkcloth *(ngatu)* (about three by three metres) and one container *(fango)* of coconut-oil.

[439] Pots from fabrication centres in Tailevu on Viti Levu also found their way to Lau.

* For further information concerning the Levuka potters see Hocart, A.M., The Lau islands, Fiji, *Bishop Museum Bul.* 62, 1929, pp. 18-19.